

Important Notice

Ice Damming Alert

Every year in early January, the weather turns very cold (20° and below), and the snow accumulated on roofs begins to create ice-damming problems. An ice dam is a ridge of ice that forms at the edge of a roof and prevents melting snow (water) from draining off the roof.

The layer of snow on the roof acts as an extra insulation barrier that helps retain heat that escapes into the attic. The heat causes some of the snow on the roof to melt and run down into the gutters, where it quickly freezes solid due to the extreme cold. The ice then acts like a dam, backing up the water until it finds any small opening in the roof, enters the unit, and creates a leak. Unfortunately, there is little that can be done. It is too dangerous for contractors to remove snow from the roof, and the ice can't be removed from the gutters.

The Association has taken actions to reduce problems related to ice damming. All units have ridge vents that allow warmer air to flow out of the attic; and ice- and water-shield material was installed along the gutter line (about three feet up the roof from the gutter), which helps seal this area from water infiltration.

It is recommended that Unit Owners take measures to reduce moisture levels within their unit and make sure that they have adequate insulation in the attic. This means making sure that the soffits (the area by the roof's edge) are open (and not covered by insulation), and that the heating duct work is well covered by insulation material. It is recommended that extra insulation be added to the attic to further reduce heat escaping into the attic.

You also need to make sure that all noticeable paths to the attic are sealed. This includes areas such as the chimney, plumbing vent stacks, and recessed lighting. Attic stairways (the hatch to the attic) are particular hotspots, and should be weather-stripped and covered with insulation to make an effective barrier. A cold attic with good cold-air circulation will reduce the likelihood of ice damming.

If water is entering your unit from ice damming, turn down your heat to slow the melting process on the roof. If water is entering your ceiling, create a hole at the origin of the leak by sticking a screw driver or other pointy object into the ceiling and install a bucket underneath to catch the water. This will prevent the water from traveling along the beams and will minimize damage.